

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Low tolerance

On the eve of filling out my individual report for the Citizens' Forum, I read with interest Erna Paris' article *A Sad Reflection On Canada* (April 29).

We do indeed have a pervasive mythology about what it is to be Canadian. While we mouth the words about pluralism and tolerance and mutual respect, we have not internalized them.

While I do not subscribe to all of Reginald Bibby's theories, I do agree when he suggests that we may no longer care about the things we say we care about. With a high competency level, we verbalize what we have learned to be appropriate and yet our commitment level is so low to those ideas we supposedly espouse. It is interesting that in relaxed social settings those same old jokes about race or creed or sexual preference still come creeping in, and while we no longer laugh, we often stand in awkward silence.

It is not surprising that in this state of awkwardness, many find the policies of the Reform Party so appealing. It is so much easier to identify with a set of prescribed values than to struggle through the incredibly painful journey from self-examination to personal growth.

Joan Crittenden, Hamilton, Ont.

## Formula for Quebec

Conventional wisdom and *The Globe and Mail*-CBC News Poll suggest that anglophone Canadians would not accept special status for Quebec. I don't believe this is true.

Even here in British Columbia, everyone to whom I have suggested the following formula finds it acceptable: "Give Quebec more powers than other provinces, but in return have Quebec MPs not vote on matters that fall under those powers."

The poll's question did not include the *quid pro quo* that makes special status acceptable.

Greg Whincup, Sooke, B.C.

## Equality for disabled

In reference to the excellent article by Chris Dafoe, *Segregation Goes By The Boards* (April 25), the Coalition for Integration NOW! applauds the Ontario Minister of Education for supporting equality in education for children with disabilities through her intervention in the Alixe Hysert case.

Our coalition, made up of major advocacy groups representing approximately 150 local associations across Ontario, was formed to advocate for legislative amendments to the Education Act which would give our children a guaranteed right to integration.

We support Education Minister Marion Boyd in her efforts to accelerate integration and to pull together relevant groups in policy discussions to ensure that integration will be successfully implemented.

However, the Ministry of Education's true commitment to equality for our children can best be demonstrated by providing legislated guarantees now. This means the legislated right to attend neighbourhood schools, in age-appropriate classes with whatever program modifications and support are necessary for both student and teacher.

Even though many families across Ontario have been fighting for years for changes to the act, we are willing to trust the minister and wait one more year for implementation in September, 1992. We trust that she will not let us down.

Our children have been waiting decades for equality in Ontario. School integration is the major stepping stone to equality of opportunity and independence in adult life.

Our children have much to gain through learning and growing alongside their typical peers. They have even more to give.

Equality rights for students with disabilities will be a victory for all children in Ontario.

Louise Bailey, Chairperson  
Coalition for Integration NOW!  
Willowdale, Ont.

## Underwriter's lament

Re Satellite's \$240-Million Insurance In Doubt (April 24):

I am concerned with the quote from one veteran of space insurance, who spoke on condition he not be identified and who is convinced Telesat is headed for trouble. "You can be damned sure the underwriters will try to find every way they can to wriggle out of it, in all or in part," he said.

This is an entirely unfounded and irresponsible remark to make against underwriters who, in my long experience and that of my corporate colleagues, have never behaved in this way when faced with an insured experience such as a disaster.

In undertaking Satellite Launch Insurance, the underwriters around the world are particularly aware and well informed of all the special issues at stake with each particular mission. Nobody is going to "wiggle" out of any legitimate responsibility, and all have sympathy for the enormous hardship this kind of disaster can create for everyone concerned.

Certainly, major losses have occurred in the past and some have arisen from mechanical failures and others from human errors. That is all part of the underwriting of the risks that this business is all about.

Please do not lead the business community to think that our industry overall, and the space risk field in particular, is founded on anything but hard work, good will and integrity. I see no reason to remark that the "satellite's \$240-million insurance (is) in doubt."

Stephen J. White, Senior Vice-President  
Reed Stenhouse Ltd. Toronto

## Ontario's budget

Clear across the country, one can hear the woeful lamentations and witness the anxious hand-wringing of *The Globe and Mail's* editorial writers and columnists over the \$9.7-billion deficit forecast in the Ontario budget (The Red Ink In Ontario's Budget — April 30).

The Ontario government has decided not to increase unemployment by putting hundreds or thousands of its civil servants out of work, as other provinces have done, and you rue the day. They decided to spend money to help other workers keep their jobs, but that, you say, is fiscally irresponsible.

Of course, some of the increase in the Ontario government's expenditures will go to people already on social assistance.

Many of these people were thrown out of their jobs when their employers decided to lock their doors, cut back investment, or lay off workers as the result of a recession driven by the federal government's economic policies and the consequences of free trade — both of which *The Globe* supports!

At least *The Globe* is right when it says the deficit will affect investment in Ontario. For example, the increased welfare payments will make it marginally easier for single mothers living in poverty to make long-term investments like shoes for their children or short-term investments like groceries for their families. Money the government intends to grant to hospitals and municipalities will have a positive effect on the investment all Ontarians have in their health or the education of their children. Every worker has a tremendous investment in his or her job, and the budget will make some of those investments a little more secure.

These kinds of investments are important, too, and in my opinion the government did not go far enough.

George Ehring, Vancouver

## End state of war

Hasan Abdul Rahman, chief representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Canada, seems troubled by what he calls "Israeli myths," which he sees operating to exclude fair treatment of Palestinians under international law (letter — April 24). At the same time, after declaring Israel to be engaged in "an old pattern of outlawry," he says, "Still, the PLO keeps faith that dialogue is the route to statehood, convinced that justice will prevail."

Mr. Rahman must take us for fools. It is incredible that he can suggest that the PLO is anything other than a terrorist army, so soon after the gulf war, with memories of PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein embracing, rededicating themselves to the destruction of Israel, with memories of the PLO launching katyusha rockets into Israel from Lebanon to "open up a second front," and with memories of Palestinians dancing in the streets of Amman or on rooftops west of the Jordan every time there was a Scud attack still fresh in our minds. We know as well of the brutal treatment of Palestinians by a host of Arab powers over the years and by PLO operatives, too.

Rather than spinning yarns to enmesh and undo what he calls "myths" from which he aspires to deliver us Canadians, Mr. Rahman's time would be better spent pressing Israel's Arab neighbours to do as Egypt did and end the state of war with Israel, and establish diplomatic relations, so that the countries of the region can deal with the very issue which Mr. Rahman supposedly sits in Ottawa to address.

Ian J. Kagedan  
B'nai Brith Canada, Ottawa

*The Editor of The Globe and Mail welcomes letters from readers on any subject but reserves the right to condense them as may prove necessary. Letters should include the name, address and daytime telephone number of the writer.*